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## **STATEWIDE SELF ADVOCACY NETWORK MEETING** **INFORMATION**



**DATE:** Tuesday, December 12, 2023



**TIME:** 10:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Members of the public may participate in person, telephonically, or by Zoom. Accessible formats of all agenda and materials can be found online at

[www.scdd.ca.gov](http://www.scdd.ca.gov)

### **MEETING DETAILS:**

#### **ZOOM LINK:**

<https://bit.ly/SSAN2023December>

#### **Call-in Information:**

**CALL IN NUMBER:** (669) 900 9128

**MEETING ID:** 849 2417 9897

**PASSCODE:** 951357

### **Accessibility**

Pursuant to Government Code Sections 11123.1 and 11125(f), individuals with disabilities who require accessible alternative formats of the agenda and related meeting materials and/or auxiliary aids/services to participate in this meeting should contact Riana Hardin at (916) 263-8196 or [Riana.Hardin@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:Riana.Hardin@scdd.ca.gov) or Beth Hurn at (916) 263-8194 or [Beth.Hurn@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:Beth.Hurn@scdd.ca.gov). Please provide at least 5 business days prior to the meeting to allow adequate time to respond to all requests.



# AGENDA

December 12, 2023  
10:00 AM – 3:30 PM

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## 1. Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

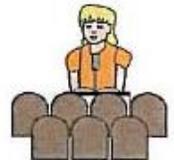
Presented by:

- Charles Nutt, Chairperson
- Nicole Patterson, Vice-Chairperson
- Rebecca Donabed, Secretary



## 2. Public Comment

Public comment is welcome. Comment on agenda items is taken as they are discussed.



## 3. Review and Approval of September 2023 Minutes

Presented by: Charles Nutt, Chairperson

**ACTION**



## 4. SCDD Update

Presented by: Aaron Carruthers, SCDD Executive Director

**Information**



## 5. Updates on SSAN Workgroups and Projects

Presented by: SSAN Leadership Team

**Information**



## 6. Supported Decision-Making Technical Assistance Program (SDM-TAP)

Presented by: SCDD SDM-TAP Staff

**Information**



## 7. Demonstration of the SSAN Trello Board Tool

Presented by: Riana Hardin, SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator



**Break**



**8. Approval of December 2023 SSAN Newsletter**

Presented by: Robert Levy, Newsletter  
Project Chair

**ACTION**



**9. SCDD Legislative Efforts for 2023**

Presented by: Bridget Kolakosky, SCDD  
Deputy Director of Policy and  
Public Affairs

Veronica Bravo, SCDD Policy Analyst

**Information**



**10. Approval of SSAN 2023 Annual Report and  
2023 Network Reflections**



**11. Planning for 2024 SSAN Activities**

ALL



**12. Adjournment**



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**DECEMBER 12, 2023**

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 3**

**ACTION ITEM**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***Approval of September 2023 Minutes***

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***Attachments***

- September 2023 Minutes

***Recommended Action***

Approve the September 2023 SSAN Meeting Minutes

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# DRAFT

## Statewide Self-Advocacy Network Meeting Minutes September 7, 2023 Zoom

### **SCDD Regional Members Present**

Sonya Force – North Coast  
Charles Nutt – North State  
Lisa Cooley – Sacramento  
Ellen Sweigert – North Bay  
Sara Desumala – Bay Area  
Rebecca Donabed – Sequoia  
Sean Sullivan – Orange County  
Julie Gaona – Los Angeles  
Eric Aguilar – San Bernardino

### **Agency Members Present**

Alex Reyes – SCDD  
Desiree Boykin – ARCA  
Talmadge House – CFILC  
Nicole Patterson – DDS  
Scott Barron – DRC  
Robert Levy – UCD MIND Institute  
Jessica Riestra – YO Disabled and Proud  
Wesley Witherspoon – USC CHLA

### **Members Not Present**

Robert Balderama – North Valley Hills  
Kecia Weller – UCLA Tarjan Center  
San Diego and Imperial County Rep

### **SCDD Staff in Attendance**

Rihana Ahmad – SCDD HQ  
Aaron Carruthers – SCDD HQ  
Janet Fernandez – SCDD HQ  
Riana Hardin – SCDD HQ  
Beth Hurn – SCDD HQ  
Bridget Kolakosky – SCDD HQ  
Tania Moraweic – SCDD HQ  
Charles Nguyen – SCDD HQ  
Gabriela Solval – SCDD Bay Area

### **Others Present**

Megan Christian  
Sabrina Epstein  
Wayne Glusker  
Sarah May  
Holly Oliver  
Peter Salgado  
Viri Salgado  
Renee Wooten



# DRAFT

## **SSAN Minutes**

### **1. Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions**

SSAN Chairperson Charles Nutt, North State Representative, called the meeting to order at 9:45 AM. Members were asked to introduce themselves by sharing their name, the region and/or agency they represent and how they prepare for an emergency. Members mentioned keeping a flashlight nearby, knowing where important documents are, having an extra supply of medication to grab, creating a go bag, along with other tips and resources.

### **2. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **3. Review and Approval of June 2023 Minutes**

The members reviewed the minutes from the June 8 & 9, 2023 meeting. Materials for this agenda item can be found on pages 7-14 of the September 2023 SSAN Meeting Packet.

**ACTION: Motion #1 to approve the June 2023 minutes was made by Robert Levy/Seconded by Wesley Witherspoon. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed. See vote log on page 6 of the minutes.**

### **4. Updates to the SSAN Bylaws**

Proposed updates to the SSAN Bylaws were presented to members for their considerations. Proposed Changes to the SSAN Bylaws included:

- Renaming the Operations Workgroup to be Leadership Team with only the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary of SSAN as members, but Workgroup/Project Chairs may join when appropriate
- Adding the word statewide and adding California to section 3
- Changing “partners” to “agency representatives”
- Adding the ability for SSAN to meet virtually
- Language was cleaned up to be clearer
- Included member responsibilities
- Following a discussion, it was decided that the Chair SSAN needs to be a person with an intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities



# DRAFT

(I/DD) but the Vice-Chair and the Secretary can be members with other disability types

- Outline travel request process to attend SSAN meetings
- Added information on how to replace a member temporarily due to a medical and/or personal matter
- Clarified that the Chair of SSAN has the ability to appoint the chairs of workgroups and projects
- The role of SSAN Ambassador was created for members who step down as a member of SSAN but want to continue to be involved with SSAN projects.

**ACTION: Motion #2 to approve the 2023 Updates to the SSAN Bylaws was made by Nicole Patterson/Seconded by Wesley Witherspoon. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed. See vote log on page 6 of the minutes.**

## 5. SSAN Workgroup Structures and Projects

Members talked about the challenges of the current workgroups and the need for change.

**ACTION: Motion #3 to dissolve the current SSAN workgroups was made by Ellen Sweigert/Seconded by Talmadge House. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed. See vote log on page 6 of the minutes.**

Members talked about the need for SSAN to continue to stay informed about issues like legislation even without a workgroup on the topic. Since October is established as National Disability Employment Awareness Month, members decided that it would be good for the workgroups to be focused on employment. The four workgroups discussed were Employment Webinar Workgroup, Employment Tipsheet Workgroup, Employment Success Stories Workgroup, and Disability Training Workgroup.

**ACTION: Motion #4 to create 4 employment focused workgroups as presented was made by Charles Nutt/Seconded by Alex Reyes. A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed. See vote log on page 6 of the minutes.**



# DRAFT

## 6. SCDD Update

State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) Executive Director Aaron Carruthers updated members on SCDD activities since the June SSAN meeting. SCDD continues to support self-determination and self-direction by supporting the Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SSDAC), promoting person centered thinking, and supported decision making. SCDD has been involved in several employment related projects and initiatives and has recently awarded grants to businesses in both the Los Angeles and the Bay Area interested in improving hiring practices and increase the number of people with disabilities employed at their companies and businesses. A fact sheet on the recently announced changes to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was given out and members talked about the value of internship programs in helping people with disabilities gain experience.

Members discussed the challenges of managing disability benefits and employment opportunities.

## 7. Updates on SCDD Legislative Efforts and the Office of Employment First

SCDD Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs Bridget Kolakosky provided members with updates on SCDD legislative activities since the June SSAN meeting. SCDD is working closely on with the newly created Office of Employment First, a new coordinated effort between the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to promote competitive integrated employment (CIE) for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Advocates are encouraged to email [Bridget.Kolakosky@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:Bridget.Kolakosky@scdd.ca.gov) if they are interested in sharing their employment success stories.

Members talked about the different incentives for state agencies, non-profits, and businesses to hire people with disabilities, including the California Paid Internship Program (PIP) as a great pathway to employment.



# DRAFT

## 8. Approval of September 2023 SSAN Newsletter

SSAN Newsletter Project Lead, Robert Levy reviewed the DRAFT September 2023 Voices of SSAN Newsletter. Project Lead Levy called for a motion to approve the September 2023 Edition. Materials for this agenda item can be found on pages 49 - 60 of the September 2023 SSAN Meeting Packet.

**ACTION: Motion #5 to approve the September 2023 Newsletter as presented made by Ellen Sweigert/Seconded by Wesley Witherspoon. Motion passed. See vote log on page 6.**

After the vote was taken, members shared their ideas for the next edition of the newsletter. The December 2023 edition will be about celebrating the accomplishments of people with disabilities since December 3<sup>rd</sup> is International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

## 9. Volunteer to Career

Rebecca Donabed, Community Organizer at Resources for Independence Central Valley (RICV) talked about how volunteering with an independent living center helped her to develop employment skills and professional relationships that helped her on her path toward paid work as a community organizer.

## 10. Brainstorming for the SSAN Annual Report

Members talked about important changes to mention in the SSAN Annual Report including the updates to the SSAN Bylaws, the new direction of the SSAN workgroups, and the success of the first hybrid SSAN meeting.

## 11. Meeting Takeaways

Members shared their appreciation on being able to connect with each other and were excited to get involved in the new SSAN workgroups.

## 12. Adjournment

The September 2023 SSAN meeting was adjourned at 3:18 PM.



# DRAFT

## SEPTEMBER 2023 SSAN VOTE TALLY

Name	Region	Roll Call	Motion 1	Motion 2	Motion 3	Motion 4	Motion 5
Alex Reyes	SCDD	In-Person	For	For	Abstain	For	For
Sonya Force	North Coast	Virtual	For	For	For	For	For
Charles Nutt	North State	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Lisa Cooley	Sacramento	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Ellen Sweigert	North Bay	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Sara Desumala	Bay Area	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Robert Balderama	North Valley Hills	Virtual	No Vote Recorded				
David Forderer	Central Coast	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Rebecca Donabed	Sequoia	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Julie Gaona	Los Angeles	Virtual	No Vote Recorded	For	For	For	For
Sean Sullivan	Orange County	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Eric Aguilar	San Bernardino	Virtual	For	Abstain	For	No Vote Recorded	For
Vacant	San Diego	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	For	For
Desiree Boykin	ARCA	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Goldie House	CFILC	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Jessica Riestra	YO Disable & Proud	Virtual	For	No Vote Recorded	No Vote Recorded	No Vote Recorded	No Vote Recorded
Nicole Patterson	DDS	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Scott Barron	DRC	Virtual	For	For	For	For	For
Wesley Witherspoon	USC – CHL	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For
Kecia Weller	UCLA Trajan Center	Virtual	No Vote Recorded				
Robert Levy	UC Davis Mind Institute	In-Person	For	For	For	For	For

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**DECEMBER 12, 2023**

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 4  
INFORMATION ITEM**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***SCDD Update***



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SCDD Executive Director Aaron Carruthers will update SSAN members on Council activity related to meeting the needs of Californians with I/DD during these challenging and unique times.

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**DECEMBER 12, 2023**

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 5  
INFORMATION ITEM**



**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

**Updates on SSAN Workgroups and Projects**

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At the September 2023 SSAN meeting, members voted to dissolve the existing SSAN workgroups. 4 New workgroups were created to focus on creating an employment themed webinar, create employment related tip sheets, collect employment success stories, and create a disability training for hotels and businesses.

The SSAN webinar happened on October 30, 2023 and received positive feedback from attendees with requests for more events and presentations in the future.

This agenda item will give members an opportunity to talk about the next steps with the SSAN workgroups and projects.

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**DECEMBER 12, 2023**

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 6  
INFORMATION ITEM**



**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

**Supported Decision-Making Technical Assistance Program**

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SCDD started the Supported Decision-Making Technical Assistance Program (SDM-TAP) earlier this year, with funding from the State of California. Supported decision-making is a way to help people who may need guidance and/or other assistance in making important decisions. This includes people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (Pw/ID), dementia, or others who may need help in understanding information, options and making informed choices. SDM is a process that respects people’s rights and dignity, promotes independence, and prevents abuse or exploitation.

The SCDD SDM-TAP team will provide SSAN with an overview of the program and recent listening sessions to gain input from community members. This item will also give SSAN members a chance to provide feedback to staff on supported decision-making.

***Attachments***

- English Supported Decision-Making Technical Assistance Program (SDM-TAP) Survey
- Spanish Supported Decision-Making Technical Assistance Program (SDM-TAP) Survey

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## Supported Decision-Making Technical Assistance Program (SDM-TAP) Survey

Supported Decision-Making (SDM) is a way to help people who might have trouble making decisions on their own. This can include people with intellectual or developmental disabilities, people with dementia, or anyone else who might need a bit of extra help understanding their options and making informed choices. SDM is a process that respects people's rights and dignity, promotes independence, and prevents abuse or exploitation.

SDM is now codified in California law. This survey is intended to get public input on a new grant program designed to expand and strengthen the use of SDM. Your input will inform planning as we create the grant structure and administer the grants.

The SDM-TAP Grant Input Survey is estimated to take about 10 minutes. You can view and respond to the survey using the link below, email your responses to us at [sdmtap@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:sdmtap@scdd.ca.gov), or call us at (916) 263-7919.

For details about the survey, visit: <https://bit.ly/3ZFxCqs>

If you have additional questions, need language translations or additional support, please email the SDM-TAP team at [sdmtap@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:sdmtap@scdd.ca.gov). Thank you!

# [Take the Survey Here](#)

Want to know all the latest about Supported Decision Making-Technical Assistance Program? Join our mailing list [HERE](#).



## Encuesta de Contribuyentes para el subsidio SDM-TAP

Toma de decisión con apoyos (SDM) es una manera de ayudar a la gente que puede tener problemas en hacer decisiones propias. Esto puede incluir a gente con discapacidad intelectual o de desarrollo, gente con demencia, o cualquiera que podría necesitar un poco de ayuda adicional para comprender sus opciones y hacer decisiones informadas. SDM es un proceso que respeta los derechos y dignidad de la gente, promueve independencia, y previene abuso o explotación.

SDM está ahora codificada en la ley de California. La intención de esta encuesta es de recibir información del público para un nuevo programa de subsidio diseñado para aumentar y fortalecer el use de SDM. Su contribución va a informar la planificación mientras creamos la estructura y administración de los subsidios.

La encuesta de contribución al subsidio de SDM-TAP (programa de toma de decisiones con apoyos y asistencia técnica) tomara unos 10 minutos. Usted puede ver y responder la encuesta en la forma, mandar las respuestas por correo electrónico a [sdmtap@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:sdmtap@scdd.ca.gov), o llamarnos al número (916) 263-7919.

Para obtener detalles sobre la encuesta, visite: <https://bit.ly/46hR4fh>

Si tiene preguntas, necesita traducciones o soporte adicionales, envíe un correo electrónico al equipo de SDM-TAP a [sdmtap@scdd.ca.gov](mailto:sdmtap@scdd.ca.gov).

## [Empezar Encuesta](#)

¿Quiere conocer la información más reciente sobre SDM-TAP? Regístrese en nuestra lista de correo [AQUÍ](#).

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**DECEMBER 12, 2023**

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 7  
INFORMATION ITEM**



**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

**Demonstration of Statewide Self-Advocacy Network Trello Board Tool**

Trello is a web-based tool designed to help teams manage and track projects and deadlines. SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator, Riana Hardin will show SSAN members how to use the SSAN Trello Board to share ideas and track the progress of ongoing projects like the SSAN Newsletter.

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**DECEMBER 12, 2023**

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 8**

**ACTION ITEM**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**



***Approval of December 2023 Newsletter***

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Robert Levy, Chair of the SSAN Newsletter Workgroup will present SSAN members with a DRAFT version of the December 2023 Newsletter and ask members for any changes or additions. Robert will then lead a discussion about ideas for the March 2024 Newsletter, so please come prepared with your ideas for the March 2024 edition.

***Attachments***

- DRAFT December 2023 Voices of SSAN Newsletter
- Voices of SSAN Newsletter Article Tips Newsletter Article Tips

***Recommended Action***

Approve the DRAFT December 2023 Voices of SSAN Newsletter

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**IN THIS EDITION:**

This issue of the Voices of SSAN Celebrates the lives, voices, and accomplishments of people with disabilities.

**Front Page:** International Day of Persons with Disabilities

**Page 3:** Employment Webinar Recap

**Page 4:** Recapping the NACDD Conference in Florida

**Page 5:** The RISE of Giants

**Page 6:** Turning Concern into Action

**Page 7:** Recapping the UC Davis MIND Summer Institute

**Page 8:** FNRC SDP Film Premiere

**Page 9:** 2023 Supported Life Conference Recap

**Page 10:** My Experience with YLF

**Page 11:** Kudos Corner

**Page 12:** Good News Corner and Self-Advocacy Reads

**Page 13:** Holiday Tips and Save the Dates

**Page 13:** Community Resources

**Page 14:** DDS CAC is Recruiting

**Editor:** Robert Levy

**Contributors:**

- David Forderer
- Nicole Patterson
- Rebecca Donabed
- Wesley Witherspoon
- Robert Levy
- Ellen Sweigert
- Sony Force
- Charles Nutt

## International Day of Persons with Disabilities



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

**What Is It:**

Since 1992, the United Nations (UN) has recognized December 3rd as International Day of Persons with Disabilities (sometimes shortened to IDPD). IDPD encourages people from around the world to be more compassionate to the challenges people with disabilities face in their everyday lives. The day doesn't discriminate between mental and physical disabilities. The spirit of the day is to ensure that all people in the world have equal opportunities for work, play, for healthcare, and for success. People with disabilities are very often contributing and valued members of society. This disability day is all about appreciating them.

When a day is dedicated to a specific population or identity group it is an opportunity to recognize their humanity and the value that they bring to their communities. Every year, the UN announces the theme for the year. The 2023 theme is "United in Action," and you can learn more about it at <https://idpwd.org/>.

Every year SSAN uses the December edition of the newsletter to celebrate the organizations that support improving the lives of people with disabilities and the accomplishments of people with disabilities in California, America, and around the world.

**Continue reading on Page 2 of the December 2023 Edition of Voices of SSAN: "IDPD"**



## Continued from Page 1 of the December 2023 Edition of Voices of SSAN: "IDPD"

Here are a few ideas on how to observe International Day of Persons with Disabilities:

1. Become an advocate: if you notice access barriers in shops or places that you frequent, encourage the shop owner, manager and/or elected officials to work to address those barriers.
2. Lend a hand by volunteering your time at a disability nonprofit, senior center, nursing home, or outpatient clinic. Something as simple as delivering needed supplies can make a big difference to someone who is struggling.
3. Show compassion by putting in effort to understand the perspective and challenges others are going through.

Here are a few social media hashtags to use to bring awareness about the day:

- #IDPD
- #IDPD2023
- #InclusionMatters
- #DisabilityRights
- #EqualOpportunity
- #AccessibleWorld
- #CelebrateAbilities

This issue is full of stories of advocates working together to create positive change in their communities. At the end of this issue is list of ways you can turn your concern into action. Hopefully our list will spark your own ideas of thing you can do to make positive change in your community and raise awareness of disability issues.

Resources and Information to Learn More about International Issues and Positions on Persons with Disabilities:

- [United Nations \(UN\) Disability Strategy](#)
- [World Health Organizations: Importance of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities](#)
- [YouTube Video: What is the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#)



## Recapping the SSAN Employment is Possible for Everybody Webinar

By SSAN Employment Webinar Workgroup

The Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) hosted their first webinar event on October 30, 2023, in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). The webinar highlighted some examples of paths taken by advocates on their employment journey in pursuing their passions.

The webinar was made-up of a panel of 5 individuals who shared stories about how they successfully entered and maintained employment, either through an organization or starting their own business. The panelists who participated are as follows:

- ✪ Rebecca Donabed – Community Organizer, Resource for Independence Central Valley (RICV)
- ✪ Robert Levy – UCEDD Self-Advocacy Specialist, UC Davis MIND Institute
- ✪ Nicole Patterson – Advocacy and Self-Advocate Liaison Specialist, California Department of Developmental Services
- ✪ Sean Sullivan – Motivational Speaker, IKnowAutism
- ✪ Nicole Adler –Equal Rights Advocate, Producer, Creative Director, and Host of “The No No Show”, and Motivational Speaker
- ✪ Lisa Cooley moderated and facilitated the event

Along with participating in the panel discussion, Nicole Adler talked about her experience as a host of the YouTube channel “The No No Show” and her dreams for the future. Check out her channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@TheNoNoShow>

The event was well received. Over 265 people registered for the event and nearly 150 people were in attendance.

The Statewide Self-Advocacy Network would like to give a special thank you to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) for their continued support in helping to promote leadership and build bridges that strengthen advocacy among disability communities.

The feedback from those who attended the event was overwhelmingly positive and we received ideas for future events, including an annual SSAN NDEAM event. Stay tuned for our next event!!



## Wesley at the NACDD Conference in July 2023

By Wesley Witherspoon, USC Children’s Hospital UCEDD SSAN Representative



The theme for this year’s National Association of Council on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) Conference was “Beyond the Conversation: It’s About Action”. The Conference was held July 22-26 in Orlando, FL. As the Chair of the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD), I was able to attend the conference along with SCDD Executive Director Aaron Carruthers. I enjoyed connecting with advocates from across all 50 States in the continental USA and 6 territories.

I had the chance to train other Council Chairs in different states on how to run a meeting. Along with learning and connecting with others, I had the chance to go to Disney Springs. It was hot and humid there, the temperature sometimes reached 95 degrees, but it felt like it was 115 degrees. It was so hot that it was even hard to walk one block without breaking a sweat. I saw a lot of lizards, and I even saw an alligator as well. Overall, Florida has a nice climate. It is warm throughout the year.

### SSAN Members

- Sonya Force – North Coast
- Charles Nutt – North State
- Lisa Cooley – Sacramento
- Ellen Sweigert – North Bay
- Sara Desumala – Bay Area
- Robert Balderama – North Valley Hills
- David Forderer – Central Coast
- Rebecca Donabed – Sequoia
- Julie Gaona – Los Angeles
- Sean Sullivan – Orange County
- Eric Aguilar – San Bernardino
- Viri Salgado – San Diego Imperial
- Desiree Boykin – ARCA
- Russell Rawlings – CFILC
- Nicole Patterson – DDS
- Scott Barron – DRC
- Robert Levy – UC Davis Mind Institute
- Kecia Weller – UCLA Tarjan Center
- Wesley Witherspoon – SCDD and USC Children’s Hospital
- Alex Reyes – SCDD



## The RISE of Giants in the North Coast Region

### RISE: Our Voice, Our Power, Our Community

**Sonya Force**, North Coast Regional SSAN Representative

My name is Sonya Force. I joined SSAN as the North Coast Regional SSAN Representative in July. Along with SSAN, I am a part of the SCDD North Coast Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) and am a member of Realizing Independent Success and Empowerment (RISE). I started my advocacy and leadership journeys when I joined RISE. The North Coast Region of California is famous for their majestic Redwoods and the storied trails of Bigfoot that can be found in the area. As part of the Redwood Coast Regional Center, we, a group of folks with disabilities, are working hard in Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, and Mendocino Counties to make a difference. We're not just a committee; we're advocates for our own lives. With the guidance of a couple of RCRC staff and a community mentor, we're diving into the HCBS Final Rule, making sure our friends and neighbors understand their rights and the services available to them.

RISE is excited to have just passed our first year of success. Our work is as diverse as the ecosystem around us. We've had our hands in everything from helping with professional training to creating job opportunities through a theater program. We've pushed for better health education and stronger medical advocacy because we believe knowledge and support are key to thriving.

Every month, we meet to tackle the latest challenges and plan for the future. We've been a driving force behind People First chapters, where we champion the idea that everyone should have the chance to stand up for themselves. And we know how to bring people together—whether it's sharing a meal at a holiday dance or spreading the word through flyers, we're all about building our community.

What's truly special about RISE is that it's ours. We lead it, we decide where the money goes, and we see the impact of our decisions. Whether it's setting aside funds for snacks to boost meeting attendance or fighting for an accessible vehicle to broaden our horizons, we're making moves that matter.

**Continue reading on Page 6 of the December 2023 Edition of Voices of SSAN: “RISE”**



Continued from Page 5 of the December 2023 Edition of Voices of SSAN : “RISE”

From providing translators to make sure no one is left out of the conversation to nurturing new self-advocates within our ranks, we're all about inclusion and growth.

We are RISE: a group of friends, a team of leaders, and a family of advocates. Together, we're working to ensure that our community is one where every person, no matter their abilities, has the opportunity to live their best life. Join us, support us, and watch us as we grow—not just as a group, but as a beacon of hope and empowerment on the North Coast. I would like to thank RISE, our special mentors and RCRC for helping me realize, I still have a purpose and an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others.

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## Tips for Turning Concern into Action

It can be hard to know what you can do to help advocate for change. Here are some ideas for how to turn your concerns and worries into action:

- Share your thoughts with family members and friends
- Consider mentoring another advocate
- Write a social media or blog post, host or be a guest on a podcast, or speak in front of groups of people
- Write a letter to the editor or opinion piece for your local newspaper or organization newsletter
- Contact to your local representatives about important issues
- Get involved with your community by joining a club, board, or attending a city council meeting to share your concerns
- Donate your time by volunteering for an organization
- Join a board or commission like the [Department of Developmental Services Consumer Advisory Committee \(DDS CAC\)](#)
- Learn about the issues important to candidates and vote



## Recapping the 2023 UC Davis Summer Institute

By Robert Levy, UC Davis MIND Institute UCEDD SSAN Representative

This year marks the 18th annual Summer Institute. This year also was the first time in 4 years to have it in person. This year's Institute was also on Zoom, making it the first hybrid UC Davis Summer Institute. This year's Summer Institute was held at Hiram Johnson High School in the Sacramento area.

The theme for the event was about Inclusion for all, and the last presentation of the event was a panel discussion. The panel discussion was about personal stories about the impact of inclusion across lifespan and contexts. There were 6 different breakout sessions for the Institute. The first session focused on inclusion in education and was for both the English-speaking and Spanish speaking communities. The second session was focused on inclusion in medical settings. The third session focused on inclusion in K-12 Education. The fourth session focused on inclusion in employment. The fifth session focused on inclusion in post-secondary education. The sixth session focused on inclusion in the transition planning process.

The participants also did a survey to see what changes they want to see next year in 2024 for the 19th annual Summer Institute. There were a total of 258 attendees. Here was the break down: about 160 attendees in-person and 98 were on Zoom. All the attendees were from the US only. All of the presenters did a great job and the Summer Institute planning committee members did a great job planning another successful Summer Institute. You can watch recordings of the event, now available on UCTV and it will also be available on the UCD MIND Institute website at a later date. Check out the [UCD MIND Institute 2023 Summer Institute Conference Recap](#) newsletter article when you get the chance. You can also check out the [Inclusion: Always and for All YouTube video link](#)

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### Upcoming Event: Winter Advocacy Symposium 2024



**Hosted by:** Resources for Independence Central Valley (RICV)

**Symposium Theme:** Climb Strong and Reach the Peak

**Dates:** January 22–26

**Location:** Online [Register Today!](#)

**Session Topics:** Housing and Safety, Homeless Advocacy, Emergency Preparedness, Voting, Disability History and Advocacy, Legislative News, Environmental Advocacy, and Youth Advocacy!



## Far Northern Regional Center Self-Determination Advisory Committee SDP Film Premiere

By Charles Nutt, North State Regional SSAN Representative

Far Northern Regional Center’s (FNRC) Local Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC), of which I serve as Chairperson, hired a local filmmaker named Doug Churchill ([www.DougChurchill.com](http://www.DougChurchill.com)), to produce a short documentary film on the Self-Determination Program (SDP). When the film was completed, the Local SDAC coordinated a Film Premier, in partnership with the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD), North State Regional Office, and Disability Rights California/Office of Clients’ Rights Advocacy (DRC/OCRA), to showcase the documentary and to educate the community about the Self-Determination Program. The film follows 3 families who are enrolled in the program and how they navigate through the program. They share how the SDP has improved the lives of their loved ones and their families.

The SDP Film Premier occurred on October 19, 2023, and had 2 showings: 10am-12noon and 6pm-8pm at the Gaia Hotel in Anderson, California. The families featured in the film presented as panelists and shared their experiences in the Self-Determination Program and answered many questions from the audience. It was attended by approximately 100 people between the 2 film showings and was very successful. People seemed to learn a lot about the program and asked good questions. The Local SDAC will be coordinating future film showings to continue outreach and education for individuals and families served by FNRC.

### SSAN Mission Statement

The Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) promotes leadership and builds bridges that strengthen advocacy among disability communities by focusing on policy change.

SSAN’s past Newsletters, Annual Reports, and Meeting info, can be found at [www.scdd.ca.gov](http://www.scdd.ca.gov) under the “Self-Advocacy” tab

**Let us know if you want to see anything specific in future newsletters!**

How do you contact the SSAN Newsletter Editor Robert Levy? Leave a message for him by contacting the SCDD Self-Advocacy Coordinator **Riana Hardin at (916) 263-8196**

**Check out the [SCDD YouTube Page](#) for stories from self-advocates, past meetings, and more!**



## 2023 Supported Life Conference Recap

By Nicole Patterson, Department of Developmental Services SSAN Representative

On October 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> the Supported Life Institute held the 37th Annual Supported Life Conference at the Windham Hotel in Sacramento. There were well over 300 attendees from advocates, professionals, and parents.

On October 26th the conference was kicked off with a keynote By Joey Travolta, Founder of Inclusion Films. Joey has directed & produced over 20 films. Joey Travolta founded Inclusion Films to help train people with all abilities in the art of filmmaking, passionately creating & finding jobs for people, plus building skills transferrable to other job opportunities.

Tony Anderson, Executive Director of Valley Mountain Regional Center, and Eric Ciampa, a Service Provider from Alta California Regional Center, did a keynote during lunchtime about how two neighboring Regional Centers Valley Mountain & Alta California team up in cutting-edge efforts to professionalize work of direct support staff, service providers, and regional center staff in promoting the value of the work of creating community inclusion.

As always, the sessions did not disappoint, covering topics like employment, social recreation, self-determination, health and wellness, and communication through technology.

October 27<sup>th</sup> was another day filled with useful information starting with a kickoff keynote by Harry Bruell, CEO of PathPoint, a large service provider in Central & Southern CA that works to support people with disabilities to live the life they choose. PathPoint provides employment support, life skills, and relationship building. He is also father of a daughter with a mental health disability. His keynote focused on the need to boost employment rates and addressing the problems with obtainable solutions.

Don Perata finished off the keynotes during lunch as he shared his knowledge and experience of being a successful CA political leader. His experience includes 4 years as Leader of the State Senate. He is often described as an advocate for people with disabilities, individuals with mental illness, & the elderly. Sen. Perata continues to further policy advocacy in the field and uses his experiences to find effective ways to create political change.

The conference ended with sessions on housing, CalABLE, Home and Community Based Services Final Rule, Social Security and Employment, Building Friendships, and End of Life Support.



## Measuring the Impact of the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)

By **Ellen Sweigert**, North Bay Regional Representative

**Lisa Cooley**, Sacramento Regional Representative

The first ever California Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) happened over 30 years ago as a statewide self-advocacy and leadership development program to help high school Juniors and Seniors (transition-age) connect with pre-employment, post-secondary educational options and independent living skills like financial literacy. YLF is a meaningful program for both the attendees (or delegates), but also for those that volunteer their time to support and guide. There are a number of SSAN members who have attended YLF in the past and two that would like to share their experiences with you in this edition.

Ellen Sweigert was just a high school student who had a dream of living a life dedicated to making the world a better place for people with disabilities. The Principal of Pacific Grove High School nominated her to attend in 2006, after seeing her leadership potential. When she heard she was selected to attend she was overjoyed at being a part of something worthwhile. Ellen really had a good time during YLF. YLF helped her in many ways. She gained advocacy skills to help her speak up for herself. She was able to meet legislative members and learned from them. After the YLF Ellen was asked to sit on a panel providing feedback and share her experiences attending the YLF. Ellen definitely recommends this to anyone who wants to “go the distance” for people with disabilities. Attending YLF helped her to know for certain that she wanted to be a self-advocate and help others with disabilities find their dream.

Lisa Cooley attended the YLF Mentor Luncheon in 2007, and really enjoyed meeting with the next generation of leaders in the disability community. YLF was not something that was around when she was younger and in high school. Lisa appreciated that YLF includes disability history in their programming since it is often not included in history books or materials covered in high school. By attending the luncheon, Lisa learned that the activities that happened during the week of the Youth Leadership Forum help students who have disabilities have pride in themselves as people who have disabilities. The YLF Luncheon is great because it gives delegates the opportunity to get to know successful adults who have careers.



## Kudos Corner



Charles Nutt has a lot of advocacy experience, that started back when he joined the Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) in 2013, representing the North State Region. After being on SSAN for a year, he applied to represent the North State on the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD). After Charles was appointment by the Governor’s Office to serve on the Council in 2014, he decided to resign from SSAN to focus on his work as a Councilmember and give another advocate the opportunity to be a SSAN member. During his time on the Council, Charles was elected to serve as Vice-Chair.

After his time on the Council ended in 2019, Charles continued his advocacy work within his region by serving on the North State Regional Advisory Committee (RAC), where he was appointed Chairperson of the North State RAC since 2021. Charles is also involved in the Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) Self-Determination Advisory Committee, in an effort to support the Self-Determination Program at both the local and statewide level.

Some of Charles’ other advocacy work has included serving as a member of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC), participating in SCDD’s Project SAFEE (Self-Advocates for Emergency Education), and Leaders Empowering Self-Advocates (LESA) a group out of San Diego. Charles rejoined SSAN in 2022, to fill the North State Regional Representative vacancy. Charles was elected Chairperson of SSAN in 2022 and looks forward to working with other members of the Leadership Team to support the work of SSAN.

Through his advocacy experiences, Charles has had the opportunity to travel to other states for conferences and trainings, developed relationships with self-advocates, and remains a dedicated advocate for policy and system change to make it a better world and service system for people with disabilities. Charles feels that in order to make things happen or change the system, one needs to be involved in the process, and always be positive, productive, and professional. He believes in “walking the talk”, “practicing what you preach”, and “living your values”.

When Charles is not busy with his advocacy work, he enjoys spending time with his wife (Alissa), son (Evan), their 6 dogs, 3 cats, in their home in the woods of Northern California. As a family, they enjoy traveling, trying new restaurants, walks in nature, and playing console games. SSAN is happy to have you as a part of our network. Let’s give a big kudos to Charles!



## Good News Corner

Here are some websites that you can find uplifting news to brighten your day:

- [The Good News Network: California](#) for up-to-date information about interesting positive things that are happening
- [Positive News](#) is a site that you can check out to see what is happening around the world that is positive
- [Good Good Good](#) shares really good news, not just feel-good news
- [Happy News](#) celebrates all that is good in the world
- [Optimist Daily](#) is a site that shares solutions and good news from around the world

## Disability-Related Reads and Podcasts

Here are a few Self-Advocacy and Disability-related publications to check out:

 [Disability Scoop](#) is an online resource with disability-related news

 [Social Security Administration Blog](#) has SSI information

 [World Institute on Disability News](#) has updates on what is happening around the world

 [RespectAbility News](#) has updates on national efforts to engage people with disabilities in the political process



## Learn About SSAN Member Organizations

- [Association of Regional Center Agencies](#)
- [California Foundation for Independent Living Centers](#)
- [Department of Developmental Services](#)
- [Disability Rights California](#)
- [University of California, Davis MIND Institute](#)
- [University of California, Los Angeles, Tarjan Center](#)
- [University of Southern California, Children's Hospital](#)

## Self-Determination Update

Self-Determination is LIVE in California. Check out the [DDS Self-Determination Newsletter](#) for the latest on California's Self-Determination Program. Talk to your service coordinator to learn more.



## Tips for Coping with the Holidays

The Holiday Season is a fun time of year. There are so many parties and celebrations. However, it can be a hard season if someone does not have family, have problems with family, or relationships problems or alone and don't want to be. Here are some tips:

1. Do not spend too much money, there is life after the holidays.
2. Do not eat too much food, you could end up feeling sick, and it is also hard to lose weight.
3. Do not be too hard of yourself. There are high expectations. Sometimes your expectations can't be met.
4. Do not drink too many alcoholic beverages. Even though it is a happy time of year, bad things can occur during this time.
5. Take pictures and make memories, this time of year might be the only time for those memories.
6. Be kind to others, you don't know what other people are going through. Volunteer, give to people who need things, etc.
7. Take time for yourself, remember self-care is important.
8. Talk to your support staff, neighbors, co-workers, and/or people who live with you.
9. Get plenty of sleep
10. Take care of your pets and plants.
11. Be thankful for what you have it, it could be worse.

## SAVE THE DATES

**Disability Rights California**



[Events and Trainings](#)

**CalABLE**



[News and Trainings](#)



[DO Network Training Library](#)

**Plain Language Resources**

**Available on:**

[SCDD Website](#)

**Register for the Monthly California Statewide Self-Advocacy Chats on Zoom**



[Current Issues and Resources](#)

[Voting Resources](#)

**DRC Hotline: 888-569-7955**

[Disability Vote California](#)

Have questions about the Self-Determination Program? [The Self-Determination Advocates Leadership Group](#) meets monthly on Zoom

## Community Resources



[SARTAC Zoom Meetings](#)

[ARCA Public Policy Resources Library](#)



[DRC's Resource Library](#)



[CalABLE](#)

[National Council on Disability](#)



**National Council on Disability**  
An independent federal agency committed to disability policy leadership since 1978



[Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Program](#)



## DDS' CAC is RECRUITING!

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) provides advice to DDS on policies, programs, legislation, and regulations that affect the lives of Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

### About the CAC:

- ☀ Fifteen (15) self-advocate members from all over California
- ☀ Meets at least four (4) times a year in Sacramento, or online with Zoom
- ☀ Members share information with their local self-advocacy organizations
- ☀ Brings input from those groups back to the CAC
- ☀ Transportation, hotel, meal, and facilitator costs (if needed) will be paid by DDS

### If you would like to apply to be a CAC member, here is what you need to do:

- \* Check the link below to see if we are recruiting from your regional center.
- \* You must have an intellectual or developmental disability and receive regional center services to apply.
- \* You must be a member of a local self-advocacy group or other organization that serves or empowers people with developmental disabilities.
- \* You **MUST** be nominated for membership by your local self-advocacy group or developmental disability organization.

DDS is currently recruiting CAC members served by the following regional centers:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| * <b>Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC)</b> | * <b>North Bay Regional Center (NBRC)</b>     |
| * <b>Regional Center East Bay (RCEB)</b>         | * <b>Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC)</b> |
| * <b>Inland Regional Center (IRC)</b>            | * <b>San Andreas Regional Center (SARC)</b>   |
|  | * <b>Tri Counties Regional Center (TCRC)</b>  |

**Please Note:** Regional Center employees are not eligible for CAC membership.



Interested advocates should fill out the online [DDS Consumer Advisory Committee Application](#) and submit it with their nomination letter.



## Voices of SSAN Newsletter Article Tips

**Audience:** Keep in mind that “Voices of SSAN” is shared with people across California. Try to write articles that would interest the statewide disability community.

**Purpose:** Is the article a human-interest story or an issues story? If it is a human-interest story, can you tie it back to an issue or larger regional or statewide problem?

### Helpful Tips:

- Tie your article back to the Mission/Vision/Purpose of SSAN
- Articles should be about systemic (city/county/regional/statewide) problems
- Limit individual advocacy articles
- Stay away from writing about personal details of an individual

**Types of Articles:** Articles in “Voices of SSAN” should be related to the SCDD State Plan. The SCDD State covers topics of Self-Determination, Employment, Housing, Health and Safety, Transportation and other Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS). Article types can include:

- Informational and Resource Sharing (you want the reader to learn something)
- Call-to-Action (you want the reader to do something)
- Event Recaps
- “Kudos Corner” articles are recognize the advocacy efforts of others
- Announcements and Save the Dates

### Key Parts of Articles:

- Title
- Author (Your Name)
- Introduction: Tie the article back to SSAN
- Evidence or Support: 1-3 paragraphs
- Closing: Tie it back to SSAN



## Voices of SSAN Interview Article Tips

**Audience:** Keep in mind that “Voices of SSAN” is shared with people across California.

### Choosing a Person to Interview:

- Is the person a regional/statewide/national/international leader?
- Does the person have the ability to affect change?
- Does the person have a story or experience people with disabilities from across California can relate to?
- Is the person making positive impact/or change that can be shared with other regions/organizations to improve their practices?

### Choosing a Message

- What do you want the reader to learn from reading the article? Make sure you have a clear purpose in mind when writing
- Do you want to inspire others to do something like get involved in a project or campaign?

### Choosing Your Interview Questions

- Ask questions that relate to SSAN, self-advocacy or the focus areas in SCDD’s State Plan
- Choose questions that relate to your message
- Ask open ended questions that will allow the person to respond in detail.
- Avoid questions that can be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”

### Writing Your Interview Article

- Add your own thoughts in response to what the interviewee has said
- Use the interview’s responses to shape your article instead of having a questions/answer format
- Remember your audience and purpose when writing your interview article

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**DECEMBER 12, 2023**

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 9  
INFORMATION ITEM**



**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**

***SCDD Legislative Efforts for 2023***

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SCDD Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs Bridget Kolakosky will be joined by SCDD Policy Analyst Veronica Bravo to provide members with an overview of 2023 SCDD Legislative achievements and share updates on the development of the new California Office of Employment First. Members are encouraged to share any ideas for future legislation.

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**DECEMBER 12, 2023**

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 9  
INFORMATION ITEM**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**



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***Approval of SSAN 2023 Annual Report and Network Reflections***

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The 2022–2023 SSAN Annual Report summarizes SSAN activities for the past year. SSAN members will have the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the 2022–2023 SSAN Annual Report.

***Attachments***

- DRAFT 2022–2023 SSAN Annual Report

***Recommended Action***

Approve the DRAFT 2022–2023 SSAN Annual Report

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2022 – 2023 |



# SSAN Annual Report

The Statewide Self-Advocacy Network



The 2022 – 2023 SSAN Annual Report was produced by the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities



California State Council on Developmental Disabilities  
3831 North Freeway Blvd. Suite 125  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
916-263-7919

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# About SCDD

The California State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) is established by state (Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act or Lanterman Act) and federal (Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 or DD Act) law and is one of 56 State Councils on Developmental Disabilities within the U.S. and its territories. SCDD belongs to the National Association for Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD), which provides guidance and support to all 56 Councils. Growing and supporting self-advocacy is a core principle for every State Council, as identified by the DD Act.

SCDD designated ‘Self-Advocacy’ as the focus for its first goal in the new 2022 – 2026 5-year state plan and is committed to supporting self-advocacy in California. To meet its commitment to establish and strengthen a program led by individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, develop and promote leadership skills, and expand participation in a cross-disability coalition, SCDD created the Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) in 2012. Through supporting SSAN, SCDD aims to help self-advocates throughout California advocate for their civil and service rights and be integrated and included in all areas of community life. SCDD supports the efforts of SSAN members to be leaders in their communities.

# About SSAN

The Statewide Self Advocacy Network (SSAN) promotes leadership and builds bridges that strengthen advocacy among disability communities by focusing on policy change.

## Vision Statement

SSAN is a cross-disability network of self-advocates that was established in 2012 and works to do the following:

- Develop the knowledge and skills to make a difference in our region and state
- Speak up for all people with disabilities.
- Learn about and advocate for issues important to all people with disabilities
- Lead regional and statewide advocacy groups and networks
- Train advocates in their communities to grow the Self-Advocacy movement in California
- Share information about programs and supports for people with disabilities

# Agency Connections



[California State Council on Developmental Disabilities](#)



[California Department of Developmental Services](#)



[California Foundation for Independent Living Centers](#)



[Association of Regional Center Agencies](#)



[Disability Rights California](#)

## California UCEDDs



[UCLA Tarjan Center](#)



[USC Children's Hospital](#)



[UC Davis MIND Institute](#)

# SSAN Members (Roster) 2021–2022



- North Coast Region – Nathaniel Florez/Sonya Force
- North State Region – Charles Nutt
- Sacramento Region – Lisa Cooley
- North Bay Region – Ellen Sweigert
- Bay Area Region – Regina Woodliff/Sara Desumala
- North Valley Hills Region – Robert Balderama
- Central Coast Region – David Forderer
- Sequoia Region – Rebecca Donabed
- Los Angeles Region – Julie Gaona
- Orange County Region – Sean Sullivan
- San Bernardino Region – Daniel Fouste/Eric Agular
- San Diego Imperial Region – Paul Mansell



- Association of Regional Center Agencies – Desiree Boykin
- California Foundation of Independent Living Centers – Goldie House
- Department of Developmental Services – Nicole Patterson
- Disability Rights California – Scott Baron
- State Council on Developmental Disabilities –
  - Matthew Lagrand
  - Maria Marquez
- University Center on Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
  - UC Davis MIND Institute – Robert Levy
  - UCLA Tarjan Center – Kecia Weller
  - USC Children’s Hospital – Wesley Witherspoon

# Message from SSAN Leadership

Thank you for electing us to serve as your SSAN Leadership Team from December 2022– December 2024. As your SSAN Leadership Team, we were committed to continuing the important self-advocacy work of SSAN to make sure that people with disabilities are included in society and able to live meaningful lives. The great part about SSAN is that it connects advocates from across the state and opens doors to opportunities of collaboration. During the remainder of our time as the SSAN Leadership Team, we promise to continue to supporting SSAN members and creating ways to connect with our communities during these difficult times. We hope to continue supporting the vision of building a solid SSAN identity by supporting cross-disability partnerships and working collaboratively with the workgroups to support SSAN projects.

The need for self-advocacy, leadership and social engagement continues to be clear as we continue to face different public health, safety, climate-related, and social justice concerns. We want to thank both SSAN members and our supporters for their hard work in and commitment to supporting self-advocacy. During these challenging times, it is important to support each other by showing compassion and appreciation.

The past year has been one of change for SSAN and our members, as we have said goodbye to some members and welcomed new members to the group. We continue to work together to advocate for access to public health information and services, provide plain language public health and safety information, and end the practice of paying subminimum wage to people with I/DD in California. The SSAN Leadership Team plans to continue to work together with the next leadership team to support members during ongoing public health challenges and other social issues. Thank you for your continued advocacy and participation in SSAN.

## Charles Nutt (Chairperson)



Charles Nutt represents the SCDD North State Regional Office on SSAN. Charles started his advocacy journey by getting involved with Paradise People First, and even as Vice President for a time. Charles attended Butte College where he studied Business Computer Science and was involved in the honors society Sigma Alpha Pi, which helped him to develop an interest in leadership. After completing his degree, Charles connected with the North State Regional of SCDD.

Charles is passionate about California's Self-Determination Program (SDP) and currently serves as the Chair of the Far Northern Regional Center (FNRC) Self Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC) in an effort to increase the number of people enrolled in self-determination. Charles hopes that through his leadership, he is able to listen and learn from his fellow officers and collaborate to find solutions and build a strong ship to strengthen self-advocacy in California. Charles would like to strengthen the self-determination program, educate others about resources, bring motivational speakers to SSAN and focus on getting youth involved in advocacy. Charles is excited to serve as the 2022–2024 SSAN Chair.

## **Nicole Patterson (Vice-Chairperson)**

Nicole Patterson represents the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) on SSAN. Nicole is the Advocacy and Self-Advocate Liaison with DDS. Nicole has worked in the field of empowering people with different disabilities for over 30 years and has spent the last 17 years working within DDS in different roles, advising department leadership and working with advocates to build their confidence and encourage them to speak-up for themselves.



Nicole has been involved with the SSAN since the beginning. My vision for the SSAN during this term is that we become even more of a driving force when it comes to people with disabilities involving services and supports, youth engagement, employment, growing self-determination in the state of California, and gaining more seats at the table when policies and procedures are being changed that involves people with disabilities.

## **Rebecca Donabed (Secretary)**



Rebecca Donabed represents SCDD Sequoia Regional Office in the Central Valley on SSAN. Rebecca works as a Community Organizer for Resources for Independence Central Valley (RICV). Rebecca has been part of SSAN since 2013 and am excited to take on the role of Secretary. Rebecca is active in her local community and is a part of several different committees focused on transportation, voting, and employment.

Rebecca served as Secretary of SSAN from 2016-2018 and is excited to be in the role again. Being on SSAN, means that she can get more involved in her advocacy work on the state level and bring it back to her community.

# 2022–2023 Meeting Highlights

SSAN held 4 meetings between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023. Three meetings were held over Zoom, and one was a hybrid meeting. Some highlights from meetings include:

- Organizational Practices:
  - Elected 2022 – 2024 Leadership Team
  - Reviewed and approved an updated MOU between SSAN and SCDD
  - Drafted and approved a Medical Leave Policy
  - Updated the SSAN Bylaws
- Training:
  - Bagley Keene Act
  - Youth Organizing and Advocacy Tools
  - SCDD Travel Policy Training
  - Emergency Preparedness Training
  - Leadership Development
  - Individual Advocacy vs Systems Change
- Provided guidance and feedback on accessibility and plain language for:
  - SCDD Facilitation Guide
  - SCDD Webpages
- Engaged in systems monitoring and feedback:
  - SCDD-supported legislation and agency updates
  - Home and Community Based Waiver (HCBS) updates
  - DDS Coordinated Family Services
  - Efforts to end subminimum wage in California
- Discussions/Conversations:
  - Grieving the loss of a loved one
  - The impact of SSAN

# 2022–2023 SSAN Approved Materials and Member Projects

- Reviewed and Approved
  - Minutes from 4 full SSAN meetings
  - Minutes from workgroup meetings
  - 2021-2022 SSAN Annual Report
  - Reviewed and approved 4 editions of the SSAN newsletter
  - Updated SSAN Employment First Presentation
- Projects and Collaborations
  - Department of Developmental Services (DDS) projects
  - Updated SSAN presentations
  - UC Davis MIND Institute PAIR Projects
  - Created a SSAN Youth Seat
  - Participated on SCDD Disability Expert Advisory Panels (DEAPs)
  - Developed the [SSAN Transition Employment Survey](#)

SSAN Members are regularly asked to participate in events and present at conferences because they are strong leaders in their communities across the state and throughout the nation.

- Members' Presentations and Project Topics:
  - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
  - Self-Advocacy
  - Self-Determination
  - Healthy Relationships
  - Conversations with Medical Students

# 2022–2023 Member Highlights

SSAN Members participate in Coalitions, Boards and Planning committees throughout California along with providing self-advocates, family advocates and others with trainings related to increasing self-advocacy and access to community supports. Highlights from members during the 2022 – 2023 reporting period include:

- Participating on SCDD Regional Advisory Committees (RACs)
- Participating actively in virtual governance meetings
- Organizing, attending and presenting at the following events:
  - People First (PF) gatherings (Virtual)
  - CHOICES Conference (Virtual)
  - California Statewide Self-Advocacy Conference (Hybrid)
  - Disability Vote California trainings and chats (Virtual)
  - Regional Self-Advocacy chats (Virtual)
- Collaborating on the UC Davis MIND Institute PAIR Project
- Serving on IHSS Public Authority, transportation boards, People First groups
- Sharing their stories with Legislators in support of SB 639 and the importance of ending subminimum wage in California
- Working with regional centers on Coordinated Future Planning Taskforces
- Collaborating with SCDD Regional Offices to give regional and statewide trainings
- Collaborating with SCDD Regional Offices to distribute personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Giving presentations and informing their communities about SSAN
- Giving presentations on the Self-Determination Program

# Measuring the Impact of SSAN



“SSAN provides advocates with the unique opportunity to have honest conversations about issues and share ideas about how to address barriers. SSAN is made up of leaders from across California and we are looked at as role models. I would like to see us work on building more of a public presence. I would like to see one major project a year and really focus on a pressing issue.”

– Scott Barron, Disability Rights California Representative

“SSAN is important to me because it is a network of individuals who have a similar goal to teach self-advocacy and to become stronger leaders for individuals with disabilities in their communities throughout California and even nationally.”

– Charles Nutt, North State Regional Representative



“SSAN is important because it provides members a chance to share their thoughts and concerns for the developmental disability community in California. I am excited about expanding SSAN and the Self-Advocacy Movement to help the next generation of people who have developmental disabilities.”

– Lisa Cooley, Sacramento Regional Representative



“SSAN is a great way for talented passionate advocates to not only learn about issues, but also learn from each other. Together we are strong and able to advance the advocacy movement. No matter your age, there is always something you can learn. Everyone has value and something to add to the discussion.”

– Robert Balderama, North Valley Hills Regional Representative



# Planning for the Future

A common theme brought up in 2023 SSAN meetings was the interest in connecting with other advocates in California and across the country. Members are interested in growing the inclusive, collaborative nature of SSAN in the near future. Here are a few ideas shared by members at meetings:

- Connect and educate advocates in California
  - Outreach to regional center and independent living center self-advocacy groups
  - Reach out to advocates with diverse identities and needs
  - Work together to share ideas and solutions to problems
  - Share ways that advocates can get involved in their communities by getting on boards and commissions
- Create Resources and Trainings
  - Increase the number of plain-language and easy read resources
  - Teach people about their rights and services
  - Teach people about the importance of voting and connecting with local officials
- Restructure Workgroups to focus on short term projects
  - Educate others on employment options and resources
  - Improve accessibility of public transportation
  - Improve accessibility of medical offices and hospitals
  - Increase the availability of affordable and accessible homes
- Connect with the next generation through social media, storytelling, and mentorship
- Host community engagement events
- Learn more about and get more involved in legislative issues



California State Council on Developmental Disabilities  
3831 North Freeway Blvd. Suite 125  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
(916) 263-7919

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**DECEMBER 12, 2023**

**SSAN MEETING AGENDA ITEM 10  
INFORMATION ITEM**

**Statewide Self-Advocacy Network**



***Planning for 2024 SSAN Activities***

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SSAN Members will have the opportunity to share their ideas for 2024 SSAN Activities.

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